

**Case 3220*****Ovula gisortiana* Passy, 1859 (currently *Gisortia gisortiana*; Mollusca, Gastropoda): proposed precedence of the specific name over that of *Cypraea coombii* Sowerby in Dixon, 1850**

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this application under Articles 23.9.3 and 81.2.3 of the Code is to conserve the widely used specific name *Ovula gisortiana* Passy, 1859 for an Eocene fossil species of cowrie (family CYPRAEIDAE) from western Europe by giving it precedence over the senior subjective synonym *Cypraea coombii* Sowerby in Dixon, 1850.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; Mollusca; Gastropoda; CYPRAEIDAE; *Gisortia*; *Gisortia gisortiana*; *Cypraea coombii*; cowrie; Eocene; western Europe.

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1. The name *Ovula gisortiana* Passy, 1859 (p. 948) was given to an Eocene fossil species of cowrie (family CYPRAEIDAE). This nominal species is the type species by original designation of the genus *Gisortia* Jousseume, 1884 (p. 89). The name *O. gisortiana* has been used by numerous authors. A list of 25 representative references, which include Vredenburg (1927), Schilder (1930), Wenz (1941), Walls (1979), Burgess (1985) and Lorenz & Hubert (1999), has been given to the Commission Secretariat.

2. Cossmann (1886, p. 434) made an unjustified emendation of *gisortiana* to *gisortiensis*. The bibliographic reference *Ovula gisortiana* Valenciennes, 1843, introduced by Deshayes (1865, pp. 568–569), refers to an oral presentation at the Académie des Sciences de Paris. It has never been published (see Vredenburg, 1927) and as such is an unavailable name.

3. *Cypraea coombii* Sowerby was described in Dixon (1850, p. 188, pl. 8, fig. 6). However, with the exception of systematic lists (see Article 23.9.6 of the Code), this name has had only limited use (see Schilder, 1929, pp. 299–300, 306).

4. Schilder (1929, p. 306) noted the similarity between the nominal taxa *C. coombii* and *O. gisortiana*. Discoveries of new specimens from the Late Ypresian of Gan (see Dolin, Dolin & Lozouet, 1985) and from the Early Lutetian of the Paris Basin show that the species *C. coombii* (type material from the Lower Bracklesham beds (Lutetian), England; Schilder, 1929, p. 306) is probably conspecific with the species *O. gisortiana* (type material from the Middle Eocene of Gisors (Lutetian), France; Schilder, 1929, p. 306) making the name *O. gisortiana* a junior subjective synonym of the name *C. coombii*.

5. We propose that the specific name of *Ovula gisortiana* Passy, 1859, which is in widespread use, be given conditional precedence over the little-used name *Cypraea coombii* Sowerby in Dixon, 1850 in accord with Article 81.2.3 of the Code. Commission approval will mean that if the two names are considered to be synonyms, *gisortiana* becomes the valid name for the taxon.

6. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to give the name *gisortiana* Passy, 1859, as published in the binomen *Ovula gisortiana*, precedence over the name *coombii* Sowerby in Dixon, 1850, as published in the binomen *Cypraea coombii*, whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Gisortia* Jousseau, 1884 (gender: feminine), type species by original designation *Ovula gisortiana* Passy, 1859;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
  - (a) *gisortiana* Passy, 1859, as published in the binomen *Ovula gisortiana*, with the endorsement that it is to be given precedence over the name *coombii* Sowerby in Dixon, 1850, as published in the binomen *Cypraea coombii*, whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms (specific name of the type species of *Gisortia* Jousseau, 1884);
  - (b) *coombii* Sowerby in Dixon, 1850, as published in the binomen *Cypraea coombii*, with the endorsement that it is not to be given priority over the name *gisortiana* Passy, 1859, as published in the binomen *Ovula gisortiana*, whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms;
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *gisortiensis* Cossmann, 1886, as published in the binomen *Ovula gisortiensis* (an unjustified emendation of *Ovula gisortiana* Passy, 1859).

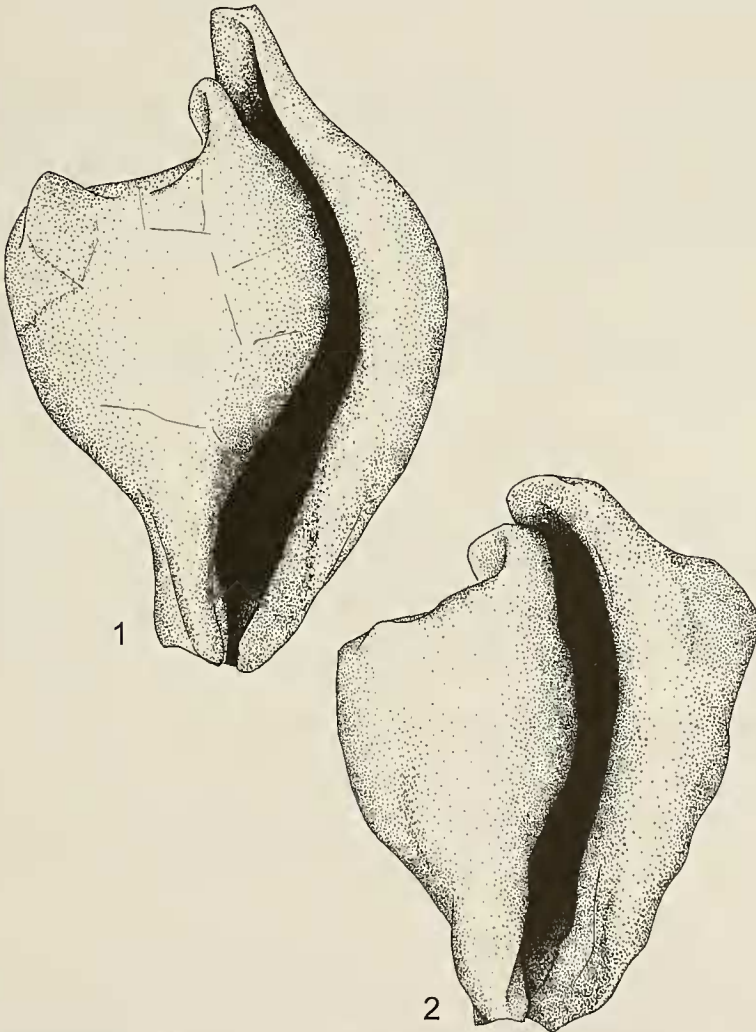
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Comments on this case are invited for publication (subject to editing) in the *Bulletin*; they should be sent to the Executive Secretary, I.C.Z.N., c/o The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K. (e-mail: [iczn@nhm.ac.uk](mailto:iczn@nhm.ac.uk)).



1. *Ovula gisortiana* Passy, 1859, Holotype by monotypy (MNHN-LP, Cast no. R62966) from Lutetian (Eocene) of Mont-de-Magny, Gisors (Eure), height: 290 mm.
2. *Cypraea coombii* Sowerby in Dixon, 1850, Lectotype (BMNH, no. 71708a) from Lutetian (Eocene) of Bracklesham (England), height: 165 mm.